

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 04432 212109Z

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13

RSR-01 /103 W

----- 014036

R 212001Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8309

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

GOV PANCANAL

USCINCSO

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PN, PQ, IAJC

SUBJ: CANAL ISSUE BEFORE INTER-AMERICAN JURIDICAL COMMITTEE

(IAJC)

REFS: (A) FBIS PANAMA 192016Z AUG 73;

(B) PANAMA 3394

(C) PANAMA 4120

1. WHILE WE HAVE HAD NO INDICATION OF STATUS OF DISCUSSION OF CANAL ISSUE AT CURRENT SESSION OF IAJC, REF A PROVIDES AN INTERESTING SUMMARY OF PERUVIAN AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL AND IAJC MEMBER ALBERTO RUIZ ELDRIDGE'S POSITION ON THE MATTER. AS REPORTED IN REF B, RUIZ ELDRIDGE HAD ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION OF BRINGING THE CANAL ISSUE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

2. IN BRIEF, RUIZ ELDRIDGE CONTENDS THAT "THE URGENT CLAIMS OF THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE SHOULD BE SETTLED BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS; PANAMA'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL IS INDISPUTABLE AND BY UNJUSTLY
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PAGE 02 PANAMA 04432 212109Z

EXERCISING FULL JURISDICTION OVER THE ZONE THE UNITED STATES IS

MAINTAINING AN INADMISSIBLE COLONIAL SITUATION." HE FURTHER STATES THAT" THE CANAL IS BASICALLY A NATURAL PANAMANIAN GEOGRAPHIC RESOURCE" AND THAT THE TRUE LEGAL RELATIONSHIP WHICH EXISTS IS THAT OF AN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE. IN VIEW OF THE TREATIES BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE U S, AND BECAUSE "INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND BODIES SHOULD TAKE ACTION BEFORE A SERIOUS CRISIS ARISES," HE RECOMMENDS THAT A SOLUTION BE FOUND "THROUGH THE CHANNELS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW."

3. COMMENT. WHILE GOP WELCOMES AND WILL USE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS LEVERS TO APPLY PRESSURE ON U S IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, IT HAS NOT ARGUED THAT SUCH ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD SETTLE CANAL PROBLEM. PANAMA'S UN AMBASSADOR IN PRESS INTERVIEW JULY 27 ASSERTED THAT U S-PANAMANIAN PROBLEM OVER CANAL WOULD HAVE TO BE RESOLVED BY BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. (SEE REF C). SAYRE

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